

Supplemental Memorandum

To: STATE BOARD MEMBERS

Date: May 28, 2003

From: Susan M. Bennett, Administrator, Educational Options Office

Re: ITEM # 17

Subject Entry requirements and registration process for 'other alternative schools' participating in the Alternative Schools Accountability Model (ASAM).

Please find attached:

Attachment 1: [Reconsideration of Entry Requirements for Alternative Schools Participating in the Alternative Schools Accountability Model \(Pages 1-5\)](#)

Reconsideration of Entry Requirements for Alternative Schools Participating in the Alternative Schools Accountability Model

Background. The Alternative Schools Accountability Model (ASAM) is a multiple-indicator system. By design, schools participating in the ASAM are held accountable not only for performance on the STAR Indicator/Academic Performance Index (API), but also for performance on several additional performance indicators. ASAM schools select the additional indicators appropriate to the student populations they serve from a list of 15 indicators approved by the State Board of Education (State Board). These additional indicators include, for example, measures of attendance, credits completed, courses completed, suspension, and—beginning in 2003-2004—pre-post tests of achievement.

Under the requirements of the federal No Child Left Behind (NCLB) Act the ASAM schools, like all other schools, will be held accountable for adequate yearly progress (AYP) based on the percent of students who are proficient in reading and in mathematics. (See attached chart for a comparison of accountability as provided under NCLB for schools that are held accountable through the ASAM and for non-ASAM schools.)

A variety of schools serving high-risk students, including Community Day Schools, Continuation Schools, Opportunity Schools, Juvenile Court Schools, County Community Schools, and California Youth Authority (CYA) Schools are eligible to participate in the ASAM as it was established with State Board approval in 2000. These types of schools are all defined by the California Education Code. The Public Schools Accountability Act (PSAA) also specified that other “alternative schools” would be eligible to participate in the ASAM. The PSAA Advisory Committee recommended, and the State Board approved, participation of alternative schools in the ASAM if their school principal, district superintendent and local board president certified that they served a majority of students characterized by one or more of the following:

- classified as being at high-risk for behavioral or educational failure.
- expelled or under disciplinary sanction.
- wards of the court.
- pregnant and/or parenting.
- recovered dropouts.

The first of these criteria—high-risk for behavioral or educational failure—has been further defined as follows:

“This refers to the characteristics of students served by Continuation Schools, Opportunity Schools, Community Day Schools, and County Court and Community Schools as distinguished from students served by low-performing schools.”

Questions have recently been raised about the appropriateness of the ASAM for certain of the ‘other alternative schools.’ The concern is whether the criteria that ‘other alternative schools’ have had to meet in order to participate in the ASAM have been sufficiently well-defined and rigorous.

To address these concerns, the PSAA Subcommittee on Alternative Accountability considered the option of limiting participation in ASAM to only the following types of schools: Continuation Schools, Opportunity Schools, Community Day Schools, Juvenile Court Schools, County Community Schools, and CYA Schools. These specific types of alternative schools, their mission, and the student populations involved are defined by the California Education Code (‘defined alternative schools’). The Subcommittee rejected this option because it would exclude ‘other alternative schools’ that serve the same types of students that are served in the ‘defined alternative schools.’

The Subcommittee instead recommended revised entry requirements for ‘other alternative schools’ to participate in the ASAM, as described below. The full PSAA Advisory Committee unanimously concurred in this recommendation. The following two recommendations from CDE are based on the recommendations of the Subcommittee and full Committee, as well as further conversations with State Board representatives.

Recommendations for the State Board to Consider

A. Allow ‘other alternative schools’ to participate in the ASAM if they meet the following three conditions:

- 1. Their specific purpose is to serve, usually for less than a full academic year, high-risk students who are referred from other schools. High-risk students are defined as students who are or were:**
 - expelled (*Ed. Code 48925[b]*) including situations in which enforcement of the expulsion order was suspended (*Ed. Code 48917*).
 - suspended (*Ed. Code 48925[d]*) more than 10 days in a school year.
 - wards of the court (WIC 601 or 602) or dependents of the court (WIC 300 or 654).
 - pregnant and/or parenting.
 - recovered dropouts (Dropout Guidelines for 2003 California Basic Educational Data System [CBEDS] at <<http://www.cde.ca.gov/demographics/dropouts03.htm>>.)
 - habitually truant (*Ed. Code 48262*) or habitually insubordinate and disorderly (*Ed. Code 48263*), and whose attendance at the school is directed by a school attendance review board (SARB) or probation officer (*Ed. Code 48263*).
 - retained more than once in kindergarten through grade 8.
- 2. Seventy percent (rather than a majority) of their students meet these criteria.**
- 3. They register with CDE by submitting a registration form (see sample attached) indicating the percentage of students at the school who meet the more rigorously**

defined characteristics of high-risk students. The school principal, district superintendent, local school board president, and appropriate county office of education superintendent would be required to sign the form validating the information submitted. CDE would also review the revised form.

These requirements would exclude those ‘other alternative schools’ that could not meet the new, more rigorous criteria.

- B. Allow districts or county offices of education to petition the State Board on behalf of ‘other alternative schools’ that did not meet the criteria in A. to allow such schools to participate in the ASAM. Such a petition would need to be based on compelling evidence that ASAM participation was appropriate based on the characteristics of the student populations served by such a school.**

Comparison of Accountability Requirements for ASAM Schools and Non-ASAM Schools		
School Size	ASAM Schools	Non-ASAM Schools
Schools of Sufficient Size for CDE to Determine AYP¹	AYP API and ASAM Indicator data	AYP API
Schools Too Small for CDE to Determine AYP²	API ^{*3} Test results incorporated into district AYP and CDE provides technical support for district to determine school-level AYP	API ^{*3} Test results incorporated into district AYP and CDE provides technical support for district to determine school-level AYP
Schools Too Small for CDE to Determine AYP or Report API⁴	Test results incorporated into district AYP and CDE provides technical support for district to determine school-level AYP ⁵	Test results incorporated into district AYP and CDE provides technical support for district to determine school-level AYP ⁵

¹ Following California's *Accountability Workbook* proposal, the school must have at least 100 valid test scores from 100 or more students eligible for testing to meet annual measurable objectives in mathematics and English language arts.

² The school had fewer than 100 valid test scores for purposes of determining AYP, but for purposes of calculating an API it had more than 10 valid test scores and tested 85 percent of the eligible students in each content area.

³ API* published for disclosure purpose only.

⁴ The school had less than 11 valid test scores.

⁵ Data may need to be rolled up for two or three years.

Registration for 'Other Alternative Schools' Alternative Schools Accountability Model

School Name _____ District Name _____

County-District-School (CDS) Code _____

Name of Principal _____

School Mailing Address _____

Phone with Area Code (____) _____ FAX Number (____) _____

E-mail Address _____

- A.** I request that this school be held accountable under the Alternative Schools Accountability Model. This school is an Alternative School designed to serve, for less than a full academic year, a high-risk student population as indicated in B.
- B.** I certify that the stated purpose of this school is to serve students in the population(s) that I have checked below, and that these students currently make up 70% or more of the student population.

Indicate the percent of students served at your school in each of the following categories (total may exceed 100%)

_____ expelled (*Ed. Code 48925[b]*) including situations in which enforcement of the expulsion order was suspended (*Ed. Code 48917*).

_____ suspended (*Ed. Code 48925[d]*) more than 10 days in a school year.

_____ wards of the court (WIC 601 or 602) or dependents of the court (WIC 300 or 654).

_____ recovered dropouts (Dropout Guidelines for 2003 CBEDS California Basic Educational Data System [CBEDS] at <<http://www.cde.ca.gov/demographics/dropouts03.htm>>.)

_____ habitually truant (*Ed. Code 48262*) or habitually insubordinate and disorderly (*Ed. Code 48263*), and whose attendance at the school is directed by a school attendance review board (SARB) or probation officer (*Ed. Code 48263*).

_____ retained more than once in kindergarten through grade 8.

C.

Name of Principal		Signature of Principal			
Name of Superintendent		Signature of Superintendent			
Name of Board President		Signature of Board President		Date Passed by Board	
Name of County Superintendent		Signature of County Superintendent			
CDE Use Only:		Date Received:		Approved by:	

- D.** Please FAX the completed form AND mail the completed form to:

Educational Options Office
California Department of Education
660 J Street, Suite 400
Sacramento, CA 95814-2483